

Blue Mountains Rhododendron Society of New South Wales Inc.

www.rhodogarden.org.au

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July/August 2012

NEWSLETTER

Vol. 38 No. 4

PO Box 238, Blackheath, 2785.

Annual General Meeting Saturday 18 August 2012 at The Lodge starting at 2:00 pm

We welcome all members, especially those who have recently joined us, to our 43rd Annual General Meeting and election of committee members for the ensuing 12 months.

Please note that members need to be financial to be able to vote.

**ANNUAL membership RENEWAL fees
(for 1st July 2012 to 30th June 2013)
are still only \$11 per person per annum**

The Agenda for the meeting will be supplied separately

August Guest Speaker

**Judy Finch
(Manager / Community Development
Worker - BANC)**

Judy Finch has recently returned from a year of working as a volunteer in Timor Leste. Judy is known to the local community as the manager at the Blackheath Area Neighbourhood Centre.

With a long term commitment to the development of East Timor and years of working through the local Blue Mountains East Timor Sisters group and the friendship committee under Council, Judy has previously made many visits to our nearest neighbour and still one of the poorest nations in the world.

Judy will talk about her work in the isolated rural area of Hatobuilico, located at the foot of Timor's highest peak, Mt Ramelau, and her experience of volunteering with a national women's development NGO on reducing violence for women.

Advance Notice - September

Please note that the next general Meeting will be held on Saturday 15th September, as the Lodge will be in use during the Open Days in October.

Election of new committee

At this AGM a new management committee for the Society is to be elected. According to the Society's constitution the management committee will consist of the office-bearers and (up to) seven other members. The office-bearers consist of one President and up to three Vice-Presidents, one Honorary Secretary, one Honorary Treasurer and one Membership Secretary. **Sabina Erica**, President of the Rhododendron Festival Committee, has kindly consented to be Chairperson for the election.

A nomination form is attached to this newsletter. If further copies are required please contact Alan on 4787 6983. Nomination forms must be returned to the Secretary by Friday 17th August.

See Page 3 for the guidelines to be followed for voting at the AGM.

From the President

In these times when taking a second job or working after retirement might be a necessity for some, our volunteers have been lucky enough to try their hand at plumbing. After receiving an unusually large water bill we realised we had a huge water leak – but where? The answer was found by man-power (about 12 man-days) as our (exhausted?) volunteers walked the pipe-lines, trekked back and forth to the meter, and under Dick's expert eye replaced defective valves and broken junctions. This has saved us probably over \$2000 worth of plumber's time. Many thanks to Dick, Geoff, Pat, Paul and Alan, and to visitor Tony Crawford for his early help on the problem.

One year on from those terrible winds of July 2011, our professional tree-cutter has commenced work on the dangerous trees and overhangs in the one-third of our Gardens still kept closed to the public. We hope to clear the felled timber and have all the areas open by this October.

On a (rare) fine Monday morning recently, as I was pulling out yet another feral plant in the Gardens (a Western Australian bluebell creeper Sollya), I noticed a grey fluffy shape low in the nearby bushes. It was a young Rufous Whistler snapping up insects or worms from the area I had just weeded. At a distance of one or two metres from me it stayed, in happy anticipation, for at least half an hour. After my lunch-break it returned for another feeding session. This bird species usually migrates northwards before winter, but obviously some prefer to overwinter in the Blue Mountains; as "companion birds" they provide another good reason to protect our wonderfully varied understorey of native and exotic shrubs.

July was a sad time for some of our members. Our sympathies and thoughts go out to **Pam Smith**, whose elder brother died in England; to **Bill Webster**, whose wife Jan frequently attended our meetings and working bees; and to **Jan Knight**, whose husband Ken had been ill for some years.

The seasons roll on, and Rhodos such as 'Christmas Cheer' and 'Seta', usually flowering in early to mid August, are already blooming, and even the sunny end of the R. yakushmanum hedge near the Lodge is bursting into flower.

I will be stepping down as President at this coming AGM in August, having advised members at last year's AGM that I wished to serve just the one year. My hope is that the Society will be rejuvenated once again, as always happens, by the election of a new President and new members to the management committee, with each of them bringing to the committee their own ideas, for the ultimate benefit to the Society.

Jeannette Adrian - President

June General Meeting

The meeting on Saturday 16th June was attended by 20 members and 1 visitor, with 22 apologies being received. It started at 12 noon, with our traditional lunch of various soups, with crusty bread, sandwiches and other goodies.

The formal part of the meeting started with **Jeannette Adrian** welcoming **Linda Thomas**, our guest speaker – and thanking all those who had brought along the soups.

The Treasurer's Report, given by **Joan Hailstone**, showed a Cash Book Balance of \$34,344.62, plus Term Deposits totalling \$209,142.49.

The Garden Report, given by **Dick Harris**, is shown on the next page in this newsletter.

General Business included advice from **David Cook** that no more photos are required for next year's calendar which is now being prepared.

Val Moorhead has volunteered to set up and maintain the roster of volunteers for our Open Days – but more volunteers are required!

Dick thanked **Geoff Cannings**, **Bill Webster** and others for so ably filling in for him while he and Pat were overseas. Dick also spoke briefly about their trip.

The guest speaker was **Linda Thomas**, who has worked at the Blue Mountains City Council for the last 10 years in bush conservation and weed management. As total weed eradication is not possible, her focus is on the management and impact reduction of weeds within the whole Council area. The Mountains are divided into 4 major areas, with each area containing different weed types. Linda described the difference between Noxious weeds (eg Blackberry, Privet, Broom, etc), which legally must be controlled, and Environmental weeds (anything else) where education is needed to prevent them spreading.

At the end of Linda's talk, Dick proposed a vote of thanks on behalf of those present.

The meeting closed at 3:45pm and was followed by afternoon tea.

Garden Report – July 2012

Since returning from overseas most of my time has been taken up finding and repairing leaks in the Gardens watering system. I have been helped with this task by both Geoff and Pat, and at times also Paul. We found a major leak in the valley which has been repaired, and also a leak at a gate valve just on the right hand side of the in road. This valve has been replaced. We have also replaced a gate valve that controls water to the Lodge, toilets, Bob Baker Walk, etc. This valve appeared to work, but had a faulty spindle and wasn't shutting off properly.

There is still a small leak, and through a process of elimination Pat and I proved that this leak is somewhere in the line between the water meter and the Lodge. This leak is very small and will be difficult to find. Further investigation will be done to narrow down the location of this leak. Despite the plumber indicating that the polythene pipe is not high pressure but rural pipe (high pressure piping was not available when the watering system was installed), it is not the pipe but the old style fittings that are causing the problems.

I am now keeping all gate valves that control the flow of water around the Gardens turned off – except for those supplying the Lodge and the toilets. All these gate valves are indicated by a white surveyor's peg with a red top. All volunteers will be made familiar with the positions in case of fire, etc.

We have started to remove dead wood from the rhododendrons that require it. The girls have been doing a good tidy up in the conifer area. Pam and Paul have weeded much of the rockery in front of the Lodge.

Lester Ives has started to remove more widow makers throughout the main public areas of the Gardens.

We need to formulate and put in place a policy for vehicles containing disabled or elderly visitors to access the valley.

Dick Harris – Garden Supervisor

New Members

We warmly welcome the following new members:

Craig & Deb Carlisle, Kingswood,
Diane Macfarlane, Leura,

and invite them to join in all the Society's activities.

Guidelines for Voting at the Annual General Meeting

1. Only financial members can vote, nominate or be nominated for a position on the Management Committee.
2. If only one member is nominated for an executive position (or up to seven members for the committee positions), then that member (or members) is/are considered elected and no vote is taken, providing that their nomination(s) was/were received by the Secretary by the advertised closing date.
3. If more members are nominated than there are advertised committee positions, and their nomination forms were received by the advertised closing date, a secret ballot will be taken by those members attending the AGM. That member (or members) with the most votes will be declared duly elected to the particular committee position.
4. If a position has NO nominations, the Chairperson can ask for nominations at the meeting ("from the floor"). If more than one person is named and seconded, a vote will be taken as in 3.
5. If a position is NOT filled at the AGM it is called a "casual vacancy" and may be filled at a later date by an appointment by the management committee.

The Management Committee consists of:

President
up to 3 Vice-Presidents
Treasurer/Public Officer
Secretary
Membership Secretary
up to 7 committee members

The committee positions of Archivist, Garden Supervisor, Newsletter Editor, Social Secretary and Webmaster will be confirmed at the first Management Committee meeting in September.

More Publicity for the Gardens!

Scott Pollock, the Manager at Everglades, **Louise Clifton**, from the Blue Mountains Botanic Garden at Mt Tomah, and **Alan Lush**, from the Society, have been involved in the production of a "Garden Trail" brochure to be published by early spring. This will highlight our three gardens plus a number of nurseries and other attractions on both sides of the Blue Mountains, and will be distributed at Information Centres and accommodation houses.

Management Committee 2011 – 2012

President

Jeannette Adrian
4787 7904

Vice President

Judy Johnston
4787 7298

Garden Supervisor

Dick Harris

Secretary

Alan Lush
4787 6983

Treasurer

Joan Hailstone
4787 5859

Membership Secretary

Marion Freidman
4787 8416

Committee Members Beryl Black, Bette Brown, Geoff Cannings, David Cook

Editor/Webmaster Alan Lush

website – www.rhodogarden.org.au

**BLUE MOUNTAINS RHODODENDRON SOCIETY OF NSW INC
PO BOX 238, BLACKHEATH NSW 2785**



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NOMINATION FORM

Term 2012-2013

I wish to nominate

.....
(name of person to be nominated)

for the position of

.....
(Name the office/position)

Signed.....
(Signature of nominator)

SECONDER

I wish to second the above nomination –

.....
(Signature of seconder)

ACCEPTANCE

I accept the above nomination

Signed.....
(Signature of nominated person)

Nominations to be returned to Secretary, PO Box 238, Blackheath,
2785 , no later than 10 am Friday 17 August 2012